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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5263  
WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS GABORONE 000821

DEPT FOR S/ES AND AF/S

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPDC PGOV BC

SUBJECT: TRANSMISSION OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT BUSH FROM BOTSWANA'S PRESIDENT KHAMA.

¶11. Embassy Gaborone received a diplomatic note (Note NO/2008 EA 6/16 (s) XXVIII (77) C1) from the Government of Botswana conveying a letter to President Bush from President Khama. The transcription of the diplomatic note follows:

¶12. "Republic of Botswana  
NOTE NO: 40/2008 EA 6/16 (s) xxviii (77) C1

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Botswana presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and has the honour to forward a letter from His Excellency Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, President of the Republic of Botswana to His Excellency Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America on the assistance extended to Botswana.

The Ministry will be obliged if the letter was conveyed to its highest destination.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Botswana avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America the assurances of its highest consideration.

29 August 2008  
Gaborone

Embassy of the United States of America  
Gaborone"

¶13. The transcription of the letter to President Bush from President Khama follows:

¶14. "Republic of Botswana (seal)

The State President  
PPO 8/12 VI (75)

Gaborone  
21 August, 2008

Your Excellency,

The United States of America and Botswana enjoy excellent bilateral relations. These friendly relations manifest themselves in many fields of practical co-operation. The consistent support and assistance extended to Botswana has had such a positive impact in the wellbeing of Botswana that I deem it important and appropriate to reiterate our deep gratitude.

Since the 1990s the US Government provided assistance to Botswana in combating TB, HIV and AIDS epidemics. The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention was a key partner in the establishment of our national comprehensive Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission programme. Under the Botswana/United States of America (BOTUSA) partnership, we pioneered in the establishment of voluntary counseling and testing centres. All these programmes have been crucial to our response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Your Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), has since 2005

to date, allocated Botswana US\$264 million to cover our efforts in the prevention, treatment, care and support of HIV/AIDS. Preliminary indications from the local PEPFAR Office here in Botswana, are that we are likely to receive an additional US\$90.6 million for the next Country Operational Plan allocation starting October 1st 2008.

All this assistance has made a huge difference, and will continue to do so in the future, in securing the health and lives of Batswana.

We also salute the American people for their spirit of caring, giving and kindness. The American Peace Corps are in Botswana as volunteers to help us in the implementation of programmes such as Orphan Care, Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission and Community Home Based Care.

The United States Private sector, foundations and academic institutions have continued to be of great assistance to Botswana. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Merck Company Foundation, the Harvard School of Public Health and the Harvard AIDS Institute, the Baylor College of Medicine (Children's Centre of Excellence), the University of Pennsylvania and Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation are some of the key dependable partners in our efforts to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

I have no doubt that all these private companies, foundations and institutions have come to our assistance because of your leadership. We thank you and commend you for all your support. I am also writing directly to them to say how grateful we are as a country and people for the wonderful work they are doing to help Batswana.

It is against this background that I consider it important to thank you. The assistance we receive has made it possible for Botswana to effectively respond to the epidemic. We have made progress in reducing new infections, prevention of the transmission of the virus from mother to child and in our care, treatment and support programmes. This has given our people hope that they can overcome the epidemic. In this respect I wish to assure you that we will intensify our efforts in the response to the epidemic as you have certainly made it possible for us to help ourselves.

Please accept, Mr. President, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration,

Yours Sincerely

/signed/

Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

His Excellency Mr. George W. Bush,  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.  
United States of America"

15. End of transcription. Regards.

DROUIN